

REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed March 13, 2006, the Examiner objected to claim 21 as containing informalities; rejected claim 7 under 35 U.S.C § 112, second paragraph as being indefinite; rejected claims 7-11 and 21-23 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,030,326 to Azuma et al.; rejected claims 7, 12-15, and rejected claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over U.S. Patent No. 5,382,213 to Kopel et al.

By this amendment, Applicants have cancelled claims 7-11 without prejudice of disclaimer of the subject matter thereof. Accordingly, the rejections of these claims are moot and should be withdrawn. Applicants have also amended claim 21 to correct informalities and more appropriately define Applicants' invention. Applicants have also added new claim 24. No new matter has been added by this reply.

Regarding the objection to claim 21, Applicants have amended claims 21 to correct informalities. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the objection to claim 21.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims 21-23 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Azuma et al. for at least the reason that Azuma et al. fails to disclose every claim element. For example, independent claim 21, from which claims 22 and 23 depend, recites a combination including, among other things, positioning a spindle relative to a nut driving station wherein the nut driving station comprises a forward nut driver and a reverse nut driver, wherein each of the forward nut driver and

reverse nut driver is resiliently supported in a rotary mount mounted to the nut driving station for rotation a nut of the spindle. In contrast, Azuma et al. describes an automatic blade changing system that includes a rotary shaft that is fixed to a rotary head, which is coupled to a rotary cylinder. Rotation of the rotary cylinder causes the rotary shaft to spin in the direction of rotation of the rotary cylinder, which rotates the rotary head to disengage a nut of the blade assembly (see Azuma et al. col. 9, line 52 through col. 10, line 4 and Fig. 9). Azuma et al. does not, however, disclose a forward nut driver and reverse nut driver, each of which are resiliently supported in a rotary mount mounted to the nut driving station for rotation a nut of the spindle. In fact, because the rotary head described in Azuma et al. is fixed to the rotary shaft, the rotary head necessarily cannot be resiliently supported by the rotary shaft. For example, Fig. 9 provides an illustration of the blade changing system of Azuma et al., which shows rotary head 146 fixed to rotary shaft 148, which is coupled to rotary cylinder 152. However, neither the rotary head nor rotary shaft of Azuma et al. is resiliently supported in a rotary mount that is mounted to a nut driving station.

Because Azuma et al. fails to disclose every claim element of independent claim 21, or claims 22 and 23 that depend therefrom, the 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) rejection of these claims is improper and should be withdrawn.

Applicants respectfully traverse the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of claims 21-23 as being unpatentable over Azuma et al. To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), three basic criteria must be met. First, the prior art reference or references, taken alone or combined, must teach or suggest each and

every element recited in the claims (see *M.P.E.P.* § 2143.03). Second, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to combine the references in a manner resulting in the claimed invention (see *M.P.E.P.* § 2143). Third, a reasonable expectation of success must exist (see *M.P.E.P.* § 2143.02).

No *prima facie* case of obviousness has been established with respect to claims 21-23 for at least the reason that Azuma et al. fails to disclose or suggest every claim element. For example, independent claim 21, from which claims 22 and 23 depend, recites a combination including, among other things, positioning a spindle relative to a nut driving station wherein the nut driving station comprises a forward nut driver and a reverse nut driver, wherein each of the forward nut driver and reverse nut driver is resiliently supported in a rotary mount mounted to the nut driving station for rotation a nut of the spindle. As noted above, Azuma et al. does not disclose a forward nut driver and reverse nut driver, each of which are resiliently supported in a rotary mount mounted to the nut driving station for rotation a nut of the spindle. Additionally, Azuma et al. fails to teach or suggest, either explicitly or inherently, resiliently supported forward and reverse nut drivers, as required by Applicants' independent claim 21.

Because Azuma et al. fails to disclose or suggest every claim element of independent claim 21, or claims 22 and 23 that depend therefrom, the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of these claims is improper and should be withdrawn.

Applicants respectfully submit that new claim 24 is allowable for at least the reason that neither of the cited references, taken alone or in combination, discloses or

suggests every claim element. For example, independent claim 21, from which claim 24 depends, recites a combination including, among other things, positioning a spindle relative to a nut driving station wherein the nut driving station comprises a forward nut driver and a reverse nut driver, wherein each of the forward nut driver and reverse nut driver is resiliently supported in a rotary mount mounted to the nut driving station for rotation a nut of the spindle. For the reasons noted above, neither of the cited references, taken alone or in combination, discloses or suggests at least at least this claim element.

Because the cited references do not disclose or suggest every claim element of independent claim 21, claim 24 is in condition for allowance at least by virtue of its dependence from independent claim 21.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this applicant and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

FINNEGAN, HENDERSON, FARABOW,
GARRETT & DUNNER, L.L.P.

Dated: July 13, 2006

By: 

Brad C. Rometta
Reg. No. 54,387